



2006I-206

STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF ECOLOGY
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TTY 711 or 800-833-6388 (for the speech or hearing impaired)

May 2, 2006

Mr. Todd Martin, Chair
Hanford Advisory Board
713 Jadwin, Suite 4
Richland, Washington 99352

RE: Hanford Advisory Board Consensus Advice #186 – FY 2007 Budget

Dear Mr. Martin:

Thank you for sending me the Hanford Advisory Board's (HAB) advice regarding the inadequacy of the Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2007 budget for cleanup activities on the Hanford Site. The Department of Ecology (Ecology), along with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), has raised many of the same concerns about the proposed budget and its impact on Hanford cleanup.

Ecology does appreciate that the U.S. Department of Energy's (USDOE) request restored funding for constructing the Waste Treatment Plant (WTP) to levels established in their approved baseline. We are very concerned that delays in commissioning the WTP put the Tri-Party Agreement milestones for hot commissioning in jeopardy. We agree that single-shell tank retrieval activities should continue at a rate that will address the risk of releases.

We would like to see more funds made available for characterization of wastes in the 200 Area operable units. We support initiation of waste site remediation in the U Plant Area and urge the USDOE to look for opportunities to clean up other waste sites. Ecology supports funding for the River Corridor contractor at levels that will continue cleanup on approved schedules.

Ecology agrees that funding for security measures and upgrades is not part of cleanup. We were pleased to hear that the USDOE is now intending to begin shipments of stabilized plutonium offsite, which should reduce the need for expensive security measures after FFY 2009. We deem the decision to ship plutonium offsite as one way to remove barriers to cleanup of the Plutonium Finishing Plant.



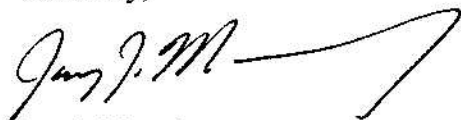
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Keeping Hanford's cleanup on a schedule that ensures the safety of the residents of the Northwest, and protects our vital environmental and natural resources is our primary focus. Governor Gregoire and I visited Washington, D.C., on April 26, 2006, to carry that message to Congress and USDOE Headquarters. We wanted the people who make funding decisions to know that Hanford needs adequate resources to continue this critical work.

The obligation to identify funding needs for Resource Conservation and Recovery Act units on the Central Plateau lies with USDOE. Focusing our attention on ensuring that the two USDOE offices meet their obligations to do the needed analysis and development is a more effective use of our resources.

If you would like more information about Ecology's 2007 budget concerns, please contact Jane Hedges, Nuclear Waste Program Manager, at (509) 372-7905.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jay J. Manning", with a long, sweeping horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Jay J. Manning
Director